

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 12135

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, RP
SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: MANILA 11762

1. NEAR END OF OUR JULY 17, MEETING, ROMULO SUDDENLY ASKED ME "DOES USG OPPOSE THE INDUSTRIALIZATION OF THE PHILIPPINES?" REPLIED ABSOLUTELY NOT; NOTED, AS HE AWARE, US HAD MAJOR INDUSTRAIL INVESTMENTS IN THIS COUNTRY AND HAD MYSELF SPOKEN ONLY LAST WEEK AT MANILA ROTARY CLUB PRAISING GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT PLANS. FONMIN THEN CLARIFIED THAT HE WAS REFERRING TO OUR ABSTENTIONS ON IFI LOANS. REPLIED THAT OUR ABSTENTIONS WERE A FUNCTION OF OUR CRITICAL STAND TOWARDS HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN THE PHILIPPINES. EACH ABSTENTION WAS INTENDED AS A REMINDER THAT WE CONSIDERED PHILIPPINE PERFORMANCE INADEQUATE IN HUMAN RIGHTS AREA. FONMIN NODDED UNDERSTANDING BUT MADE NO SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT.

2. THEN BRIEFED ROMULO ON MY MEETING LAST WEEK WITH MINDEF ENRILE (REFTEL) AND SAID HE HOPED RECEIVE GOP'S RESPONSE TO A SERIES OF WRITTEN QUESTIONS I HAD LEFT WITH ENRILE. WE EXPECTED THESE WOULD THROW CLEARER LIGHT ON GOP'S INTENTIONS IN HUMAN RIGHTS AREA, AS CHARTED BY REPEATED PRESIDENTIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS OF
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AMNESTY AND RELEASE FROM DETENTION OF THE SEVERAL HUNDREDS UNDER ARREST UNTIL LAST MONTH. NOTED THAT ENRILE HAD PROMISED TO RESPOND AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. CAUTIONED ROMULO THAT GOP SHOULD ANTICIPATE NO RAPID TURNABOUT OF USG ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHILIPPINES IN HUMAN RIGHTS AREA SINCE CONSIDERABLE SKEPTICISM REMAINS IN WASHINGTON. NEVERTHELESS, I FELT MATERIALS ENRILE HAD

PROMISED TO PROVIDE COULD ONLY BE HELPFUL.

3. COMMENT: EARLIER SAME DAY ENRILE'S DEPUTY BARBERO HAD
TELEPHONED POLITICAL CONSELOR TO ASK FOR CLARIFICATION
OF ONE OF THE QUESTIONS THE AMBASSADOR HAD LEFT WITH
ENRILE. THIS SUGGESTS THAT GOP IS GIVING SERIOUS
ATTENTION TO THE QUESTIONS.

4. WE HAVE KEPT OUR FOREIGN MINISTRY CONTACTS WELL BRIEFED
ON USG RATIONALE IN ABSTAINING ON IFI LOANS. THIS WAS
FIRST OCCASION, HOWEVER, TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE THAT
FOREIGN MINISTER HIMSELF HAS RAISED ABSTENTION ISSUE.
MURPHY

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NNN

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